

Q & A with MCPO Tim Cary regarding the new Enlisted PME

1. What exactly is the new Enlisted PME?

PME stands for: "Professional Military Education." The new Coast Guard PME will consist of a new set of PME Requirements that will replace the old MRN Qualifications. A Study Guide course for the new PME is being developed and will consist of a paper-based version, a CDROM version, and a web version. This will be one course that replaces the three now defunct MRN courses.

2. What happened to the old MRN courses?

The old MRNPO, MRNSPO and CPO courses could not be kept up-to-date. The MRN Qualifications were also limited in their ability to meet all the training and educational needs of Coast Guard personnel throughout their career. The workforce needs assessments performed over the last 10 years are largely the basis for the new Enlisted PME. These workforce needs assessments will re-occur on a regular basis ensuring the PME Requirements are updated in a timely fashion.

3. When will I see this new Enlisted PME?

The PME course developers are working with contractors right now developing the course electronically. As the course is being developed, portions of the course will go through a "Quality Assurance" scrub with many subject matter experts, several Rating Force Master Chiefs, several Command Master Chiefs, and selected field personnel. The feedback gained from this process will ensure the new course will be both accurate and complete. We hope to have the new course completed at the end of October 2003, then go through a final concurrent clearance and approval process. We believe complete approval of the new course will occur in November 2003.

4. But when will we see it?

After final approval, we will send an ALCOAST out giving the link to the web version of the course, and publish the new performance requirements. Also, the Coast Guard Institute will print the paper-based versions of the course and will create copies of the CDROM version for ordering purposes. There will be a standard distribution created for units for the CDROM version. It will take the Institute approximately 60 days to have everything ready for shipping after final approval. Perhaps late summer is my best guesses for full distribution.

5. How will the new PME affect me?

The PME will have performance requirements needing to be performed by members and witnessed by supervisors in order to be qualified for advancement. Also, there will be three end of course tests (EOCT) developed at three separate levels (perhaps at the E-4, E-6 and E-8 levels) that members will need to pass in order to take the service wide exam (SWE). Both the requirements and the tests will ensure that only those ready for advancement will take the SWE. This is similar to the Rating courses and old MRN courses.

6. What makes the new PME so much better?

First, it is comprehensive, based on workforce needs assessments and input from all the Rating review processes. This makes for a more prepared and better-trained service member for Coast Guard mission performance. Second, it gives members a one-source document for qualification and studying (EOCT and SWE). The current system gives members a list of dozens of hard-to-find references for study. Third, updates and changes will be more timely and accurate with a web-based course and regular workforce needs assessments.

7. How will it work?

The electronic versions will have lessons separated by chapter divisions and pay grade level. These lessons will prepare members for either a performance to be witnessed by their supervisor, or for the EOCT or SWE tests. The electronic versions will have interactivity. The paper-based version will contain all necessary information and helps separated by chapters and pay grade for the same purposes (performance and studying), but no interactivity.